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LET'S GET FIRED UP

By Linda Mazur

As a designer I often say that a fireplace can instantly transform your space by adding not only design interest, but also creating a warm cozy atmosphere in your home. Most newly constructed houses today are being outfitted with at least one fireplace, usually gas, but if your home does not have a fireplace – it can be simple enough to add one. Choosing the right design and product is the key to ensuring that it becomes a positive feature rather than an under-utilized element in your home. Fireplace design ideas vary greatly, but no matter what your design style, there is a fireplace for you. To limit your choices you will need to consider both the heating functionality of your fireplace as well as the overall aesthetics in the room.

When considering the design elements of your new fireplace, first decide whether your style veers more towards the traditional, like an elegant, formal mantel, or if the rustic approach

is right for you. A beautiful rough-hewn reclaimed wood beam in lieu of the traditional mantel, with the added touch of stone or tile can be an impressive look and appeals to many décor styles. Or perhaps it's the modern sleek approach to a fireplace that you love – with or without a surround. Either way you need to ensure it is the right fit for your home and décor.

Next you will need to decide on the heating functionality of your fireplace. The trend is towards gas fireplaces as they are much more affordable to install in an existing build than a wood-burning fireplace, which requires major structural work and a chimney. Not to mention, they are inexpensive to operate and can add to your home's energy efficiency, saving you money on your heating bills. Plus they are also operational during a blackout! Gas fireplaces can be installed anywhere in your home and you can heat an entire room in minutes with ease, providing you with a low maintenance alternative that still provides all the ambient beauty of traditional wood-burning fireplaces. One of my favourite brands in Canada is National Energy Equipment Inc., neefireplaces.ca, which offers diverse and inspirational styles and products.

If you reside in a condo all is not lost, you too can enjoy the beauty and comfort of the season. Electric fireplaces have come a long way in design and though not as energy efficient as a gas unit, they are a great alternative. They offer a realistic flame, the sound of fire crackling logs and even a realistic smoke effect.

Create a warm and inviting atmosphere in your home today with one of these great fireplace possibilities.

TIPS TO GET YOU STARTED:

- When decorating your mantel, be impactful, layer your accessories and remember scale is important.
- A beautiful mirror is lovely in a traditional setting but try a large, bold piece of artwork instead for an unexpected element.
- Whether you choose gas or wood-burning remember annual cleaning and maintenance is crucial for safety and maximum efficiency.



Designer Linda Mazur is the Principal Designer of Linda Mazur Design Group. With over a decade of experience, this sought out multi-disciplinary interior design firm is known for providing innovative interior renovations and full-scale build projects that reflect both timeless style and optimal functionality. The firm services Toronto and its surrounding areas. lindamazurdesign.com
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